

THE RELATIONSHIP OF LIFE-SITUATION PREACHING
TO PASTORAL COUNSELING

A PROFESSIONAL PROJECT

Presented to
the Faculty of the School of Theology
at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
In-Service Doctor of Ministry

by
Douglas Arthur Harrell

June 1976

This professional project, completed by

Douglas Arthur Harrell

*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee

K. Morgan Edwards

Joseph H. Hays

April 8, 1976

Date

Joseph C. Hays, Jr.

Dean

PREFACE

This professional project is the record and results of research in the field of the relationship of life-situation preaching to pastoral counseling.

While the present concern is related almost exclusively to the inter-related disciplines noted in the preceding paragraph, there is no intention of minimizing the other highly significant phases of pastoral work. Nor is there any desire to overemphasize these disciplines as over against other church-related vocations.

This study has resulted from a sustained and growing desire to update and acquire proficiency in the professional work of the student.

The special concern is that of re-orientation and updating in terms of new materials, new and intensified issues confronting contemporary mankind and the serious attempts to make both the preaching and pastoral aspects of the ministry more relevant.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This professional project is dedicated to the Reverend Doctor Melvin E. Wheatley, former pastor of the Westwood Community United Methodist Church of Los Angeles for many years and now the resident bishop of the Denver area of the United Methodist Church. Bishop Wheatley introduced me to Life-Situation Preaching while serving as an instructor in Homiletics at the School of Theology.

Very great indebtedness is acknowledged to the Reverend Doctor K. Morgan Edwards, professor of preaching at the School of Theology, who has served as chairman of my committee and as my major professor.

Finally, I acknowledge very great indebtedness to my family for significant sacrifices and extensive generosity in terms of understanding, time and energy to give me encouragement.

— — —

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED.....	1
Statement of the problem.....	1
Life-situation preaching.....	2
Pastoral-Counseling.....	16
Limitations of the study.....	17
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	19
Literature in the field of life-situation preaching.....	19
Literature in the field of pastoral counseling.....	27
Limitations of the previous research.....	27
3. SURVEY AND FINDINGS.....	28
Sermon #1: Nearsighted Christians.....	30
Sermon #2: Farsighted Christians.....	34
Analysis of Sermon #1.....	41
Analysis of Sermon #2.....	43
4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	46
Summary.....	46
Conclusions.....	47
Additional Research Problems.....	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	50

ABSTRACT

Statement of the problem.

Specifically, the purpose of this project was to determine if there is a recognizable and demonstrable relationship between life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling. The problem was comprised of three significant aspects: (1) to ascertain the extent or degree to which representative preaching of mine conforms to life-situation preaching; (2) to determine the extent or degree this type of preaching by me demonstrates competence and capacity to assist hearers in dealing creatively with life-situations; (3) to attempt to ascertain if there are relationships discernible as having been creatively affected in the counseling relationship by the preaching under study.

Materials and methods used.

Pertinent literary resources were utilized. These included literature in the field of life-situation preaching and literature in the field of pastoral counseling. Two selected sermons were analyzed by a control group of the congregation. These persons heard and then read printed copies of the sermons. Analysis was completed by utilization of an adaptation of the "Guide for Studying A Life-Situation Sermon" by Charles F. Kemp, an accredited authority in the field of life-situation preaching.

Findings.

The sermons analyzed indicated that they are life-situation sermons. Responses of the control group as well as a summary of the tabulated counseling data of ten years' experience indicates that there is a demonstrable relationship between life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling. Perhaps this is best illustrated by the following: (1) Fifteen hundred sixty persons made an initial contact in search of pastoral counseling. (2) Five hundred sixty were seen only once. This was due to two recognizable factors: Three-fourths or four hundred twenty of these persons found their problems solved or resolved or gained a sense of direction and the remaining one-fourth or one hundred forty of this group were subsequently referred to another counselor or therapist. (3) The remaining one thousand persons were seen varying numbers of times, ranging from short terms to one year and (occasionally) beyond. (4) More than one-third of the group reported that they had come to me for counseling because I was a minister. (5) The remaining group totaling eight hundred and eighty-four persons said that they sought counseling from me because of what I communicated through pulpit and other public appearances, except for eighty-one persons who had been referred to me.

Chapter 1

PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Statement of the problem.

Life-situation preaching is one of many types of preaching common to the pulpit today. It is a methodological approach intended to deal with the issues of life as they are confronted by mankind. In life-situation preaching an attempt is made to bring the resources of dynamic religion to bear on these life situations in a functional manner. Although used by some prominent preachers, the approach has not become standardized.

The purpose of the project was to determine, specifically, if there is a recognizable and demonstrable relationship between life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling.

The problem was comprised of three significant aspects:

(1) to ascertain the extent or degree to which representative preaching of mine conforms to life-situation preaching; (2) to determine the extent or degree this type of preaching by me demonstrates competence and capacity to assist hearers in dealing creatively with life-situations; (3) to attempt to ascertain if there are relationships discernible as having been creatively affected in the counseling relationship by the preaching under study.

Life-Situation Preaching.

The term life-situation preaching is descriptive of a style of preaching that attempts to avoid the remoteness and irrelevance, not to say unreality, which is sometimes characteristic of conventional preaching. Life-situation preaching starts where people are, or are presumed to be. It appears to many who utilize this type of preaching that this is the methodology of Jesus. The point of identification and departure is a live and vital concern, issue, confrontation or problem. It may be personal or social. It may be theological or ethical. Whatever it is, the preacher has made it his business to get at the root of it. Having done this, he goes on to assist his fellow worshippers by skillfully furnishing resource material for the solution of the problem. More than this, the preacher identifies with the problem bearer, and brings to bear upon the situation Christian love and insight.¹

The place of such preaching has long been recognized and validated by sensitive clergymen of many faith groups. Lyman Beecher Stowe, as an example, spoke of "the tragedy of the unawareness of the preachers of the real problems of life."²

Nearly one hundred years ago Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in his Journal of a congregation in a little village church in New England.

¹Robert J. McCracken, The Making of the Sermon (New York: Harper Brothers, 1956), p. 62.

²Lyman Beecher Stowe, Saints, Sinners and Beechers (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1934), p. 40.

At church today I felt how unequal is the match of words against things. Cease, O thou unauthorized talker, to prate of consolation, resignation, and spiritual joys in near balanced sentences. For I know these men who sit below. Hush quickly, for care and calamity are THINGS to them. There is the shoemaker whose daughter has gone mad, and he is looking up through his spectacles to see what you have for him. Here is my friend whose scholars have left him and he knows not where to turn his hand next. Here is the stage driver who has jaundice and cannot get well. Here is B., who failed last year and is looking up anxiously. Speak, thing, or hold thy peace.³

The century that has passed has only served to intensify the situation. Emerson was sensitive to the needs of mankind. He recognized the need for life-centered preaching in his day. Throughout the intervening years much time and energy has been expended in promoting the cause of life-situation preaching. This emphasis has been intensified and enriched by Christian Education and by the Pastoral Psychology movement. The functional approach to Christian Education has caused many preachers to recognize that God confronts mankind in times of crisis and through life-situations. This has entered the process of sermon preparation and thus effectively enhanced the communication skills of preachers in many instances.

Life-situation preaching may be (and often is) quite biblical. The Gospel is addressed to the totality of life. Biblical insight may well be the most significant resource that the life-situation preacher has to communicate. However, he will attempt to bring the best of his dynamic psychology and other disciplines to bear on the life-situation, thus providing as wide a range of resource material

³Charles F. Kemp, Life-Situation Preaching (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1956), pp. 12-13.

as possible.

I began life in a rigidly fundamentalistic community. Early in life I responded to a revivalistic call "to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior". I endured a series of emotional experiences and subsequently became a member of the Methodist Church by Profession of Faith. Joining the particular denomination was a personal choice affected by the leadership of the pastor of the local church of that denomination. The pastor alluded to was an engaging preacher whose sermons were relevant and helpful. Soon thereafter, I felt "called to the ministry". This was an ever intensifying drive for me. I had a desire to bring to others the experience of God which I had enjoyed. By this time the Christian Way of life had become not mere emotionalism but a practical, warm and responsible manner of living. So effective was my witness that my entire family transferred from the fundamentalistic church of my earlier life and united with the Methodist Church.

At sixteen years of age I was assigned to serve as Student Pastor of a small struggling Methodist Church. I continued in this relationship for four years until completing college. I subsequently completed the four-year guided study program of the Methodist Church and was ordained an Elder. During the course of study I became exposed to a small book, Pastoral Psychiatry, written by John Sutherland Bonnell. This was, for me, an entirely new dimension of ministry. Subsequently, I began reading works by Russell Dicks and others. I became, early in my ministry, busily engaged in counseling.

While serving in Oregon, I enrolled at Willamette University and earned a Master of Arts Degree. No major was required for that degree. However, one of the chief motivations was to acquire counseling skills which I felt an increasing need to utilize. In general clinical counseling, I became exposed to the Rogerian theory. This non-direct approach was quite exciting. I delved into it extensively, attending seminars, reading extensively in the field, etc. The interest in counseling grew as opportunity to reach larger numbers of persons came along. At this time, health problems and frustrations in personal life caused me to undergo extensive psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. Later upon enrolling in The School of Theology, I participated in a clinical training program as a part of my seminary curriculum. During the years in The School of Theology, I gave much attention to improvement of my preaching skills as well as biblical and theological education. It was at this time that I was introduced to the concept of "Life-Situation Preaching". Recognition of this development is found in the Acknowledgments. It was suggested that this was actually the type of preaching in which I was engaged and had been throughout my ministry.

Upon entering the ministry, I read widely in theology. I became a devotee of Karl Barth. Neo-orthodoxy was a part of my emotional stress and strain during the period that occasioned my analysis and therapy. After completing therapy I was not comfortable with the basic tenets of Neo-Orthodoxy. With the initial sovereignty of God as emphasized by Barth, I had little difficulty. However, Barth having granted mankind freedom, I have difficulty in then

continuing to think of God as "Almighty". Further, I have encountered grave difficulty in accepting (since psychotherapy) the radical separation of mankind from God. I have also found it impossible to affirm total dependence upon God's grace and revelation. To me it was necessary to return to an earlier assumption of knowledge of God in and through religion and philosophy, as well as through revelation.

I was inspired to re-read much Whiteheadian philosophy while in The School of Theology. This brought me to a reading of Schubert Miles Ogden's "Existence and Faith", a volume of the German biblical scholar and existentialist theologian, Rudolph Bultmann's shorter writings. I also read Ogden's book, "Christ Without Myth" and was profoundly impressed. As a result, I came to appreciate and relate to two basic theological propositions.

These propositions are: (1) That the Christian faith may be interpreted as man's original possibility of authentic and historical existence when adequate philosophical analysis has been employed. (2) That the Christian faith is actually realizable or is a "possibility in fact" because of the historical event of Jesus of Nazareth. Ogden views the Christ event as the point of origin of the church and its "word and sacraments".⁴

Ogden tries to show that "these two propositions are mutually incompatible."⁵ He demonstrates their incompatibility by this example: "When Bultmann affirms that authentic historical existence is factually

⁴ Schubert M. Ogden, Christ Without Myth (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), p. 112.

⁵ Ibid.

possible only as faith in Jesus Christ . . . he cannot but pay the price of surrendering all serious talk of man's freedom and responsibility."⁶ He then addresses himself to the problem of the gospel and that of proclaiming it to modern mankind. As Ogden perceives the matter, those elements of traditional Christianity that are still admitted to be valid by the modern criticism of the tradition can be utilized in theological discussion.

At the heart of contemporary theology is the doctrine of Christ. Christology has been a persistent problem for me. However, even a cursory reading of the New Testament places Christ in focus as the center of the New Testament proclamation. Ogden contends that

the 'sin qua non' for a more adequate christology is to observe the important distinction between 'knowledge about' and 'knowledge of' or, in Bultmann's terms, 'existential and existentiell' understanding. The statement that Jesus is the decisive representation of the truth of man's existence can be appropriately clarified only when it is recognized that 'truth' here is not the timeless truth of 'knowledge about', but the 'existentiell' truth of 'knowledge of'. What confronts us in Jesus is not, in its first intention, a 'world view' addressed to our intellects, but a possibility of self-understanding that requires of us a personal decision.⁷

Ogden concludes from this distinction between truth that is general and truth that is personal that, "while we may hesitate . . . to say that Jesus is mankind's 'teacher', we may confidently affirm that he is its 'preacher'.⁸

I believe Jesus to be the most decisive historical demonstration of the God-man relationship. Jesus is not conceived to be a mere

⁶Ibid., p. 119.

⁷Ibid., p. 17.

⁸Ibid., p. 163.

accidental or incidental development. I am convinced that in Jesus of Nazareth God, Eternal Existence, or Historical Thou, is present.

I have found a need for meaningful understanding of three words used frequently in religious dialogue. These terms are "Christian", "natural", and "theology." (1) "Christian" means to me any perspective including serious acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Lord. This does not necessarily include any particular affirmation of faith with respect to his nature, but rather with the submission of self to him. Such acknowledgment means that life and thought are open to his positive influence as being of utmost worth and importance. Understanding Jesus' Lordship in this way may be understood as constituting the invisible or true church.

Thus Jesus Christ exhibits the redemptive process of the Living God, by whom and through whom and belonging to whom are all things. In Jesus, therefore, we perceive what Teilhard De Chardin refers to as the "spiritual and transcendent pole of universal convergence." The reason for our expectation that human development will continue and succeed in the ultimate redemption of mankind and his universe is that God is incarnated in his universe. However, this progression may be delayed by our (mankind's) resistance, and/or rebellion, which may cause a setback. This is because of the degree of freedom that is granted to mankind. At this point, life-situation preaching can make a highly significant contribution to the life of the individual (and of society). This occurs when the individual is brought to a realization that indeed it is possible the self is proving to be a setback to "The Kingdom's progress", that is, the realization through

experience of God's will. When this consciousness is achieved the individual may repent, that is, cease resisting and begin to cooperate with the revelation of God's will in Christ.

Perhaps, among Christians there would be a high level of agreement that the most vital and significant word with respect to Jesus Christ is the concise affirmation of Paul found in II Corinthians 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." On another occasion, the Corinthian correspondence, Paul rather unrestrainedly places Jesus Christ (as do Ogden, Cobb, De Chardin and other theologians of the Process Theology orientation, as well as other orientations) at the very height of human development. In I Corinthians 15:45, Jesus Christ is compared and contrasted with the first Adam, as the first man, Adam, was with the beginning of human development.

Jesus Christ stands at the height of human development. He represents the ultimate stages and developments of human character, personality, mind and spirit. To have performed the labors and endured the sufferings that were his required immense strength. He possessed great mental capacity and ability as is illustrated by his responsible handling of the scriptures and his profound dialogue with other persons, including and especially the most learned of his day. Moreover, Jesus represented the true and correct life in the context of social relationships. His attitude toward others, if followed by humanity, would bring happiness and welfare to all. More important than all other considerations is the authenticity of Jesus' spirituality. The type of relationship that he exhibits with God

and with the spirituality of the universe gave to him unprecedented power in the realms of the mental and physical and in the even more important realms of love and goodness. God made the first Adam, the first man, and made him a living being. He made the second Adam, Jesus Christ, a life-giving spirit.

It is here claimed that there is something new in Jesus Christ. At each stage along the way of human evolution there has been something new. First there was matter, then life. Seeing matter, inert, how could one envision life? Seeing early protoplasmic origins, who could envision the development of mankind? Seeing primitive mankind, who could have envisioned the evolution of conscience, love and faith? Something took place at each step of the development of God's emerging man. It was God working through his process of evolution who affected each stage of development, leading toward Jesus Christ the example of Ultimate Perfection. Jesus Christ is the most momentous point where God reveals self in human life. The Bible offers a variety of explanations as possible interpretations of that which we call "The Christ-Event". The genealogy of Jesus Christ as found in the third chapter of the Gospel according to Luke states that Jesus Christ was the son, as was supposed, of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli. He was the son of Matthat, and so the line leads on back to David, Abraham, and finally to Adam. The latter, it is said, was the son of God. Now, logically, if the first man on earth was the son of God, so was the second Adam, who is at the height of the development. So the Bible tells us of the wonderful fact of the birth of Jesus Christ. George A. Buttrick

comments on the narrative: "There is a mystery in Christ which human factors alone cannot possibly explain."⁹

Then the Bible tells about Jesus' baptism. It states that he was baptized and that at that time a voice came from heaven saying, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased."¹⁰ This means that Jesus had so lived during the first thirty or so years of his life, that God spoke to him at that time as his own well-pleasing Son, and gave him special work to do.

When the New Testament tells us about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it not only affirms that he was "descended from David (and Adam) according to the flesh", it also affirms that he was "designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead."¹¹ This text communicates the concept that God reaches down and exalts Jesus Christ in the resurrection. Jesus was a man, physically descended from David and Adam. He was so faithful to God that he died on a cross. God, therefore, raised him from the dead, declaring to everyone that Jesus was his Son.

Again, the New Testament states that Jesus Christ is the word of God. "In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."¹² A word is first of all an idea in the mind and then it is an expression of that idea communicating the idea to others. So, when we say that Jesus Christ is the Word of God we

⁹George A. Buttrick, "The Gospel according to St. Matthew: Exposition", in The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951), VII, 252.

¹⁰Mark 1:11 and Luke 3:22.

¹¹Romans 1:3-4.

¹²John 1:1.

signify that he is God's thought, and is also the expression of that thought in human life.

The concepts expressed in the preceding paragraphs represent some of the ways in which the Bible speaks of God entering into this world (universe) in the life of Christ. Life-Situation preaching can accept or to put it another way, life-situation can be used as the vehicular expression for an individual espousing any of these views of the incarnation. In each the ultimate issue is not (or should not be) how God "was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" but rather that this was (and is) the case. This is the proclamation which the faithful life-situation preacher makes. As the unique person, demonstrating faithfully and consistently a decisive and self-evident demonstration of the perfected God-man relationship, Jesus becomes at once the norm, the standard and the empowerment for progression toward an approximation of this same relationship for every person who seriously acknowledges him as Lord of life. In addition to all other resources which the life-situation preacher may bring to the pulpit and the counseling setting, this one conceptualization is his most authentic and relevant resource.

(2) "Natural" has reference to contemporary cosmology. I subscribe to the theory that meaningful dialogue about God is exceedingly difficult in this day and age. This has occurred because the limitations of the universe as previously perceived have all been pushed back or expanded so very greatly. By viewing the universe(s) (and all reality), as in the process of evolution even the (apparently) destructive implications of modern cosmological thought are

conceivably a part of the "natural" process which may be viewed as a work of God.

The universe is never static. It is never completed. Reality as Hegel has so adequately detailed it is a constant movement of the dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. With this "natural view" of the universe(s) I am comfortable, for I find it a sound foundational to the proclamation of faith and life as well.

The life-situation preacher-counselor may take cognizance of every occasion of experience and deal with each subjectively, as well as objectively. With Jesus Christ as example and source of empowerment, the person thus oriented is able to be not only objective or subjective as reason and experience suggest and/or dictate. A person so oriented may also learn through increased sensitivity to be objective about subjective evaluations and subjective with respect to objective evaluations and interpretations. This makes for an authentic "naturalness". It results in a meaningful concept of God. This concept of God integrates God into the totality of everything. It demonstrates that God is not irrelevant, static, unmoved, absolute and outside of cosmic reality as we know it. God is present and active in the midst of life. He is present in all change, creativity, newness and novelty, as well as the time concept of the past and attendant experience. Substitution of these dynamic categories of process for old static notions based upon a philosophy of unchanging substance and the fixidness of the species enhances the understanding and our capacity to experience and to enjoy life, moral and spiritual values and more meaningful relationships. Thus God's action is viewed as

inseparable from the universal, historical process ever moving forward to its appointed end in God.

This natural view of the cosmos has the advantage over other views in that it is able to take into account and deal realistically with all insights of contemporary science and at the same time do justice to the total human scene, including the manifestation of nihilistic tendencies by opening up new ways of understanding the relation of God to man and man to God within the total context of creativity.

Life-Situation preaching and counseling related to this approach is greatly increased in effectiveness by this inclusive understanding of the universe and of God. This "natural" view of Christian Theology is supported by and allied with the functional approach to Christian education. This is the case because the latter also rests upon the concept that God confronts mankind in times of crisis and through his life-situations, and conceives him as not apart at any time from the human scene. In this approach to its work, Christian education believes that it is closer to the spirit and content and ethic of Jesus Christ than some more traditional processes. Life-situation preaching at its best deals with all values--intellectual, economic, social, aesthetic, moral, political, etc. In this comprehensive form these values are blended or fused and heightened into a total meaning and worth of life in its cosmic setting. Thus it is wholly experience-centered.

(3) "Theology" is defined by me as "any coherent summary of ultimate concern and dedication which is submissive to the community

of faith (the true church)." My theology places mankind as beings responsible for their actions with freedom and personal (as well as corporate) identity through time. Freedom is truly freedom within some settled or settling conditions. These conditions are the totality of the world up to the moment of a new event. This event occurs in a world of reality and must take into account that which has occurred. Freedom lies in how the occasions will be taken into account. This is self-determination.

God is viewed by me as a part of His creation. He is manifested through the orderliness of the universe(s) and in human life and experience. He does not govern omnipotently from without. He is available and is the Eternal which has inspired worship in all ages. Such God consciousness makes the message of the church relevant and meaningful when articulated and demonstrated.

Such theology is humble. It is not arrogant or presumptuous. It does not claim to know more than it actually knows. It raises possibilities and seeks to excite the imagination that in this way it may enhance the climate and stimulate the drive toward more complete and total self-fulfillment of the individual as a member of God's family, at home in His universe. This theology is ever open to further recognition of God's greatness and an awareness of that reality.

The ecumenical church of today is speaking often of "conversations". This is descriptive of how life-situation preaching may be employed. It is the desire of the life-situation preacher to assist the individual to realize and affirm his or her own meaningful,

dynamic and enabling theological response(s). Such theologizing is vital rather than technical. It is "Christian" and it is "natural".

With this theological basis, life-situation preaching is consistent. The preacher using this methodology proclaims the good news of the new age ushered in by Jesus Christ who is presented as God's self-disclosure, utilizing the resources and methodology previously referred to.

Life-situation preaching sees people as they are, attempts to make them feel loved and endeavors to challenge (stimulate) them to an active personal response. It encourages maturation, enabling persons to solve their problems by growth in self-understanding and employment of the resources of the "Christian", "natural", "theology" which we have described in some detail. Such preaching sets forth as the goal, Christian living. It is not a denial, but a fulfillment.

Pastoral-counseling.

Counseling is variously described and defined. The description utilized or the definition rendered depends upon the orientation of the person speaking or writing. Some counselors have viewed counseling as a process of aiding and guiding the client or patient in a particular way through experiences and decisions. Others have utilized a very non-direct or semi-direct approach in which the client or patient is permitted to respond to the dynamics of a trust relationship and effectually deal with personal problems and crises. Other counselors view their role as a dynamic situation in which the counselor-client work together with the counselor alternately listening and

also making significant input through questions and suggestions for clarification and amplification. Many counselors utilize any and/or all of these methods, dependent upon where the client or patient is perceived to be in terms of functioning.

Pastoral-counseling is to be differentiated from other forms of counseling in that the counselor is first a minister who has acquired through training and/or experience insights and skills with which to better equip himself or herself to minister to and with laity in a counseling relationship. In a very real sense all pastors are presumed to have some expertise in matters of faith and morals. Since many personal problems have their origin in these areas or are intensified by conflicts of feeling in and by these areas of the life-situation, the pastor can scarcely avoid being called upon to offer counsel and guidance. Many professionals (and other persons, as well) hold the view that the pastor-counselor has a unique opportunity and capacity. The former is true because many persons who become aware of the fact that they have problems first seek counseling from a pastor. The latter is true because the pastoral counselor may offer (without apology) resources and insights that are uniquely his by virtue of his dedication, training and experience. These can be the undergirding of theological premises and understandings which other professionals do not possess, necessarily.

Limitations of the study.

This study has dealt with the aim or goal of studying two sermons preached by me, having identified myself as a life-situation

preacher. The concern was that of discovering the extent that these sermons are actually life-situation preaching, and further, the way in which these sermons and subsequent results may indicate that there is a practical and desirable relationship between life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling.

As to the former, "A Guide For Analyzing A Life-Situation Sermon" has been prepared. It is included in this project and is utilized by a control group who both heard and subsequently read the texts of the two sermons studied. They proceeded independently to analyze the sermons by this instrument. This they did anonymously.

The findings of the control group and other data are included later in this project. Conclusions based upon the research have been formulated and these are presented and discussed in succeeding chapters, with the intention of making them available for study and the further development of a more inclusive philosophy of life-situation preaching.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature in the field of life-situation preaching.

Much has been written with respect to the literature of life-situation preaching. A general discussion of this is necessary, if one is to fit contemporary preaching into this framework, and understand the issues involved.

In 1928, Harry Emerson Fosdick made one of the most significant statements yet made concerning the subject at hand.

Start with a life issue, a real problem, personal or social, perplexing the mind or disturbing the conscience; face the problem fairly, deal with it honestly, and then throw such light on it from the spirit of Christ, that people will be able to go out to think more clearly and live more nobly because of that sermon.¹

That same year, Fosdick is reported to have said:

Every sermon should have as its main business the solving of a problem--a vital, important problem, puzzling minds, burdening consciences, distracting lives.²

Fosdick exemplified precisely this style of preaching throughout his long and faithful ministry.

Very early in my ministerial practice, I began to read Fosdick and to attempt to utilize any of the great minister's techniques and

¹Charles F. Kemp, Life-Situation Preaching (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1956), p. 15.

²Charles F. Kemp, "Life-Situation Preaching", Pulpit Digest, XXVII:113 (September 1947), 60-61.

skills which seemed practical and adaptable. In pastoral visitation, both in the home and in hospital setting, I have made mental notation of concerns, issues and problems focused upon by my parishioners. These have been rather meticulously catalogued and utilized in sermon scheduling. If, for instance, a particular problem or concern is rarely or infrequently noted it is not dealt with in the pulpit. However, if it frequently occurs over a considerable period of time, it is programmed for pulpit attention. Great care is utilized to protect the identity of persons bringing the matter to my attention. As a matter of practice, I have sought throughout my ministry to be in every home of my parish at least once during the year. I also seek to be in every office and place of business or work of every member at least annually. Most years I have succeeded in about 85% of the instances. Calls are short and informal. They are productive of good relationships and the source of much data that is helpful in preaching and in counseling.

In sermon preparation I seek to make persons and their problems the subject matter. My desire is to facilitate counseling or guidance during the worship celebration and also to contribute to the atmosphere in which meaningful dialogue and creative productive counseling or guidance may occur afterwards.

In 1947 a survey was made of the three hundred typical sermons published in the Christian Century Pulpit from 1937-1947. The survey revealed that seventy of the three hundred sermons were definitely and almost exclusively life-situation in nature and substance. They were psychological and personal in concern. That is, almost twenty-five

per cent of the sermons surveyed were life-situation sermons. There were as many other sermons in which there was a strong element of the life-situation emphasis, although this was not the only or even the major emphasis. The seventy made their point of reference or emphasis obvious by the manner of titling. In these the major body of the sermon was given to this emphasis also.³

In more recent years many specialists have included references to the area of life-situation preaching in their discussions, both in classroom and book.⁴

Harold W. Ruopp, a strong advocate of this type of preaching, while serving as professor of preaching at Boston University School of Theology and at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, made a survey with the students of the two graduate schools, in order to determine just what the problems and difficulties were that were most real to the people of church and community, and how these could most realistically be dealt with through preaching. The survey covered a period of seven years, 1931-1938, inclusively. About four thousand people from more than two hundred churches responded with the desired information.

The information was carefully collected, studied, analyzed and classified according to four major categories.

³Ibid., pp. 60-62.

⁴See Halford E. Luccock, In the Minister's Workshop (New York: Abingdon Press, 1934), Chap. VI; George A. Buttrick, Jesus Came Preaching (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), Chap. V; Robert J. McCracken, The Making of a Sermon (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), Chap. III.

(1) The individual and the inner self, which contained 48.7 per cent of all the replies. This section was divided into several sub-sections, such as personality problems, misfortune, thwarted ambitions, difficulties, life decisions, desires, personal feelings, (sin and guilt feelings), and others.

(2) The individual and his relationship to the family, 21.2 per cent . . .

(3) The individual and his relationship to larger social groups and to society in general, 16.7 per cent . . .

(4) The individual and his relationship to God and to the universe, 13.4 per cent . . .⁵

In brief, it may be said that the four divisions or categories described above correspond to interpretations of the Gospel. To so state is to indulge in over-simplification of the discussion; but it serves to make more vivid the subject at hand.

Ruopp did not contend that as a result of this survey, only 13 per cent of all sermons should deal with the individual's relationship to God and the universe. He also went to great lengths to express his conviction that if this relationship were more real and valid, there would be far fewer problems in the other areas. There is, however, a clear indication of the problems that people felt to be real and basic. It appears that these results should serve to make the preacher of sermons more acutely aware of the issues faced by hearers, and thus able to deal more adequately with these problems.

It appears logical to assume that these problems do not leave the worshippers when they enter the sanctuary. This is the conviction that has led a large segment of the pastoral ministry in

⁵Kemp, "Life-Situation Preaching", pp. 60-62.

the direction of life-situation preaching which enables the pastor and church of today to effect a relationship that is meaningful and enriching.

George K. Morlan, Springfield College, Springfield, Massachusetts, has long been interested in the relationship of preaching to psychological research. In "Preaching and Psychological Research", an article published in Pulpit Digest,⁶ Morlan reports and evaluates some data that are quite germane to the interest of life-situation preaching. It is stated that the dynamic advertising of today is based upon continual psychological research. Trained research workers are employed by agencies to make opinion surveys, market analyses, and to test the reactions of people to different phrasing and to pictorial illustrations. Using the layout they have found to evoke the largest response, the advertiser draws desired patronage and gets maximum results.

The author states, in substance, that it is quite possible that our materialistic age can be accounted for in large part by the fact that materialism uses every effective technique available for selling its wares, whereas the spiritual forces have largely been content to use essentially the same methods that were used a century ago. He writes with the conviction that the preacher of today is as well trained as his counterpart of a century ago, and equally as sincere. However, Morlan contends that this is not enough to maintain

⁶George K. Morlan, "Preaching and Psychological Research", Pulpit Digest, XXXII:16 (March 1952), 15-18.

the balance between materialism and religion in a dynamic society such as ours. To maintain a mere balance, religion is seen as facing the necessity of becoming more effective in reaching the minds of people. Thus, the church's effectiveness, according to Morlan, can be increased at the rate that effective advertising improves its potent efforts. He boldly states that any institution merely standing still while others go forward is not even standing still. This is true when the relevance of the situation is considered. The reference is to the church and a growing population that is also developing sociologically and psychologically.

I contend that in order to attain a better balance, two techniques utilized by the advertising agencies should be adopted to serve the legitimate functions of religion. These two techniques are (1) market analysis, and (2) measurement of response to advertisement and presentation.

Church organizations have for several years made analyses of population trends, prior to their embarking on building programs. This practice has reduced the number of instances of over-churching to the neglect of under-churched areas. However, the market analysis which is needed has to do with ideas and issues. If ministers were actually aware of the relevant issues of concern to their flock, much boredom and tension would be alleviated. The sermons could easily be based upon these issues. Market analysis applied to preaching would involve the determination of the place for the expenditure of energy where it would be most productive. To achieve this desired goal, Morlan proposes that ministers make their pastoral calls, at least

yearly, utilizing what amounts to an "open-end" interview, with respect to the sermons that they have been hearing. He suggests that the results be made into a carefully edited report and that this be given to the congregation. A further suggestion is that this report become the basis of the preaching, with the pastor using it as a guide. The significance of this approach is indicated by the fact that when I employed this technique in a survey, I found that of 371 interview-opinions, 259 persons wanted to hear sermons that dealt with practical problems; 112 persons wanted to hear sermons that were restricted to matters of faith and obviously religious topics. There were two outstanding conclusions: (1) the great majority of laymen wanted to hear sermons that dealt with matters or issues that were practical and related to life; (2) a great many who say they want to hear sermons related to life do not understand fully what they are saying. For example, a large number of this group often did not want to hear sermons which dealt with the application of religion to problems of government, economics or international affairs. It is true, no survey can reveal what the attitude of laymen should be. However, such a market analysis could conceivably help the pastor to discover the nature of his congregation's chief concerns, and hence open new avenues of communication.

Ministers cannot, as a rule, test their sermons on small groups, as advertising agencies test their ads. However, Morlan has made a significant start on the problem of ascertaining responses. In the "open-end" interviews, he had 191 people tell him as much as they could remember or recall of the sermons that they liked

best. It was not assumed that what people remembered was the sole criterion of what they had learned. What one forgets, it is recognized, may well influence greater than what one remembers. This is especially true in the matter of character development, attitude change, etc. However, it was assumed that what was retained should provide some criterion for getting to the conscious thinking of people. The people could not tell anything significant of the sermons that they had heard more than two weeks previous. Fewer women than men could recall any sermon, but there was no significant difference in ability to recall between the regular attendant and those attending rarely. Analysis of the sermon material recalled revealed that word pictures were best retained; next, those that concerned the problems of people and their personal interests, third, those that shocked, and least of all, sermons that "stuck to religion".

It will be noted that the "open-end" interview suggested by Morlan is precisely the technique utilized by me. Further, in two previous parishes (after some years of service to the particular congregation), I have engaged in a sort of "market analysis" by questionnaires placed in the mailings of the congregation. These have been helpful in lifting up considerations and concerns and in gleaning helpful suggestions. As has been previously noted, pastoral psychology has made a very significant contribution to the practice of life-situation preaching. This has been the case as pastoral psychology has increased the basic understanding on my part. Further, psychology has enabled me to gain psychological insight to the degree or extent that I may communicate with the persons to whom I preach at

their level of emotional growth.

Literature in the field of pastoral counseling.

Preaching has psychological dimensions, and to date these have been explored less carefully than is true of some other areas of the pastoral ministry. Seward Hiltner has aptly stated this.

The key to pastoral psychology's contribution to preaching would seem to lie in the notion of communicating. Communicating is a relational word. Preaching attempts to relate in two ways: pastor to people and gospel to reception.⁷

Those who read Pastoral Psychology will long remember the special number of March, 1952. This issue was devoted exclusively to the subject of "preaching and Pastoral Psychology". It has been suggested by numerous authorities in the field of homiletics, that the relating of these two areas is the most crucial point at which a contemporary minister may bring about a new and more meaningful integration to his ministry.⁸

Limitations of the previous research.

While the literature included in this chapter indicates a long range and sustained interest in life-situation preaching, there appears to have been little interest manifested in the degree to which life-situation preaching was perceived to have a working relationship to pastoral counseling.

⁷Seward Hiltner, "Pastoral Psychology and Preaching", Pastoral Psychology, VI (November 1955), 9.

⁸John L. Casteel, "Homiletical Method for Pastoral Preaching", Pastoral Psychology, VI (November 1955), 15.

Chapter 3

SURVEY AND FINDINGS

I selected a representative control group as was my announced plan stated in Chapter 1. The control group was from the congregation which I currently serve as senior pastor. They had listened to the two sermons previously. They then utilized "A Guide For Analyzing A Life-Situation Sermon" in order to evaluate the two sermons. Complete manuscripts were provided.

A description of the control group is included at this point. The group was composed of seven persons. Their age ranged from 20-80 years of age. Three were female and four were male. While anonymity is protected, they are individually described in some detail. Person A is a college student. She is an active participant with considerable leadership ability and great dedication. She is 20 years of age. Person B is assistant dean of a large medical school. He is a leader in cancer research, little more than 50 years of age. Person C is a retired professor of history in a major university. She is more than 80 years of age. Person D is a professional gardener. He is in his late fifties. Person E is a housewife. She is very active and holds several positions of leadership in the congregation. She is 50 years of age. Person F is a businessman who owns his own store. He sings in the choir. He is in his forties. Person G has held many positions of leadership in the congregation and now holds

two positions. He is in his mid-fifties. He owns his own business.

On this and the succeeding page is reproduced the instrument adapted for utilization by the control group.

A GUIDE FOR ANALYZING A LIFE-SITUATION SERMON

This instrument is an adaptation of Charles F. Kemp's "Guide For Studying a Life-Situation Sermon". It is designed for usage by laity who are independently analyzing the sermon. The questions are designed to assist the individual in analyzing the sermons with respect to their effectiveness in dealing with a life situation.

PURPOSE: What is the preacher's chief objective?

Does he make it clear?

RELATION TO LIFE: What life situation, problem or area of experience is he dealing with?

Is the problem primarily: a. Religious?___ b. Psychological?___ c. Personal?___ d. Social?___.

Does it: a. Apply to all people?___ b. Some special group?___ c. One age group?___.

TREATMENT: Is the problem dealt with: a. Realistically?___ b. Adequately?___ c. Oversimplified?___ d. False hopes raised?___.

Does he provide practical suggestions?___.

Are the resources of the Christian Faith utilized?___.

TITLE: Does the title prepare for the sermon?___.
Is it attractive and inviting?___.

SCRIPTURE: Does the preacher use a text?___.
Does he relate it to the subject he discusses?___.
Does he use the scripture to introduce a life situation?___.
Does he draw illustrations from biblical material?___.
Does he utilize the resources to the fullest advantage?___.

ILLUSTRATIONS: Does he draw illustrations from personal experience?

From biography? ____.
 From other literary sources? ____.
 Do they help clarify the subject? ____.
 Are they true to life and experience? ____.

RELATION TO PASTORAL WORK: Does the sermon appear to grow out of personal experience? _____. Does it appear to express the thought of one who knows, understands and loves people? _____. Would it lead you to turn to the preacher (if you recognized a problem in this area) for counseling or guidance? _____.

SERMON #1: NEARSIGHTED CHRISTIANS

In the prophecy of Isaiah, Chapter 59, the tenth verse, we read these words, according to the King James Version of the Scriptures: "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes."

These words are a part of a lament with its confession of sin and its culmination in a prophetic word of assurance. The reason for the distresses of the people is the matter of their iniquities. They have expected Divine deliverance. Their anticipation is unrewarded because they have continued to "grope . . . like the blind". The text follows a general indictment of the citizenry recorded in verses 1-8. The sins of the people have erected a barrier between man and God. As so often is the case in earlier prophecy, this general indictment is followed with an emphasis on the necessity for justice and the response to the right "way" of life.

There is a disorder of the physical eye which is called "myopia". This dysfunction is commonly known as "nearsightedness". When one is afflicted with this disease he or she may only see those things

clearly and in right perspective which are close at hand. Distance vision is limited or lost. Nearsightedness results in a limited or distorted view of the world and of life.

It appears to me that there is an appropriate analogy here. Just as we may experience physical myopia or nearsightedness, so we may also suffer from emotional and spiritual myopia. This was certainly true of the disciples of Jesus. They were often given to seizing upon the day to the exclusion of the future. Their hopes and aspirations were often dashed by the immediate realities within which they found themselves. When Jesus was crucified, they thought the end had come. The bottom had literally dropped out of everything on that day which we call "Good Friday". They were further dismayed when his body was reported to be missing from the tomb. Then, when they met the Risen Christ, they were terrified. An encounter with their Resurrected Lord was a shock so great they could not deal with it except in disbelief and dismay. They were, in a very literal sense, nearsighted.

Recall, if you will, the Church of the Middle Ages. During that era the church concentrated on monasticism, economic security and learning. It withdrew from the world. It was nearsighted. It may well be that this withdrawal contributed significantly to the salvation of society. However, this viewpoint has been challenged of late. There are some who feel that contrary to what has been alleged in this regard, the church actually contributed to the fragmentation and stratification of life.

Yes, in every age the church has to fight against nearsightedness. Our own age is no exception. If the perils and disappointments of the era limit our vision, cause us to forget how God has led us through the centuries upward and onward and if these perils and disappointments cause us to fail to trust in His future leading, then we will have succumbed to spiritual myopia or nearsightedness.

Visiting the ancient catacombs of Rome, I was made very much aware of the need for keeping a good distance factor in my vision. There one sees chambers in which early services were held, adorned with precious symbols. Inscribed on walls and ceilings are scenes from the Old and the New Testament depicting the great dramas of the children of God. Among the frequent scenes are Noah and the ark and Jonah and the whale. There are pictures of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd with lamb in arms. There is the cock, reminiscent of Peter's denial of Christ. There is the phoenix, ancient symbol of resurrection. One sees the vine, symbol of the believer's union with God through Christ. Present so often is the fish because the first letters of the Greek word for fish formed the acrostic for Jesus Christ. There, also, is the anchor. It stands for certainty and hope. Those early Christians, hiding to worship, were not nearsighted. They saw beyond their miserable plight to a world redeemed by God.

The church of today, including you and me, needs to remember where it has been. There are times when we are demoralized because of attendance, finances and assumed impotence of the church. We cry nostalgically for the past. We need to see the church of the past as it was, not as it is sentimentally assumed to have been. During

the era of Colonial America, for example, slavery was an awful reality and yet the church blessed it. Drunkenness was terrible, and the clergy participated in it. Only twenty per cent of the citizens belonged to the church. The same conditions were existent during the frontier era. In fact, drunkenness was one of the major administrative problems facing Bishop Francis Asbury. As a church, we have passed through these eras. In many respects, standards of love and trust were never higher and stronger than they are today. Never has there been a time when the church was more thoroughly committed to the total conversion of mankind into the family of God. Our church, with the ancient and yet forever new message of her Lord, calls us to a total commitment of our lives.

Christians who look only at that which is near at hand and familiar are failing to live up to the challenge of their Master. At our best we seek to rectify the problem of nearsightedness by realizing that God is our Contemporary and He calls us to an ever-higher self-fulfillment. This He does as He urges us to cease groping for walls like the blind and to venture forth unafraid, led by His Holy Spirit. Christians are the true visionaires of this world. They are rooted in the past experience of God's Redeeming Grace, and they are grounded in the Hope that knowledge of Him produces. Therefore, they proceed with faith and trust to attempt to realize and fulfill the ever-unfolding purpose of God. These purposes are wrapped up in our petition from the Master Prayer, "Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as in heaven".

Josephus Daniels was Secretary of the Navy under President Woodrow Wilson. Daniels wrote an interesting book, The Wilson Era. In this volume he relates how he once interviewed the tycoon, Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie related the secret of his success in this way. He said, "I owe it all to my flashes. All my life I have awakened early. Always there has come to me a flash telling me what I ought to do. If I followed those flashes, I always succeeded. Call it what you like, it was the following of those admonitions and directions that brought me the success I have achieved". Now, there is no doubt in my mind that we all receive Divine Impulses in the moral and spiritual world. When these come, it is a happy man, woman, youth or child who, like Paul, "is not disobedient to the heavenly vision".

Let us, who form this worshipping congregation, resolve that with God's help, we will "Seize the Day", to borrow Saul Bellow's captivating title, and make the most of it. We will not be blinded to the future by the problems of the present. Nor will we have our enjoyment of the present and our anticipation of the future limited by any walls of the present "for which we grope".

SERMON #2: FARSIGHTED CHRISTIANS

Many of us who have reached our majority have been amazed to learn that we were becoming afflicted with a condition of the eyes known as "farsightedness". At first, we were convinced that printed pages held close were not printed in type as large as formerly. Then, we discovered that our arms were shorter than formerly. Upon visiting our optometrist or ophthalmologist, we became aware that we were

afflicted with hyperopia or farsightedness. We continued to have fair perspective of things far away, but extremely limited vision of things up close.

A great, great aunt of mine, Aunt Jean, could shoot in two a silk thread with her pistol at a distance of 25-30 feet when she was 85 years of age. That same grand old dame could not thread a needle, for she was a victim of farsightedness.

The author of Proverbs 17:24 recognized this problem in an emotional, moral and spiritual way, long ago. He exclaims, "The eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth".

The book of Proverbs is one of my favorite Biblical books. It is a book, not as we might suppose of mere folk sayings. The Hebrew word translated "proverb" may mean a parable or allegory or prophetic oracle. The book is traditionally attributed to Solomon. It was in Solomon's court that oriental "wisdom" was introduced to Israel. Later it became customary to attribute all books belonging to this particular literary form to that monarch. From the time of Solomon on, the wisdom teachers played an important role in Israel. They were recognized along with the prophets and priests as spiritual leaders to whom persons might look for religious instruction and moral insight. The book of Proverbs, in its present form, cannot be older than the time of King Hezekiah, late in the 8th century B.C.E. This book falls into certain natural divisions, for the most part marked off by subtitles. The nucleus consists of two collections particularly designated as "the Proverbs of Solomon". Our text is located in the second part of the first Solomonic collection. This

section is concerned with specific acts of conduct--not generalities and non-specifics. It was perhaps assembled for instruction of those who were being trained as court officials. With this background in mind, let us proceed to deal with the text. "The eyes of the fool are on the ends of the earth". The author of the text is dramatizing the foolishness of dreaming of things far away. This farsightedness may result in looking too far in the future or too far distant in the past. The practical result is that fullest enjoyment of the present is precluded. Those possibilities yet to be realized or those that have been by-passed may so dazzle and preoccupy us that we fail to exercise wisdom in dealing with the situation in which we find ourselves at the present time.

It has occurred to me that there may be three areas of our life-drama in which many of us are afflicted with farsightedness. First, there is the area of our familial living. Second, there is the area of our church-life. Third, there is the area of our community life. How often I have been guilty of failing to enjoy my family in the present. I was married very young, the first time. I may have become a minister, husband and father long before I was adequately prepared for those experiences. However, I would not change one part of my living to date. All has been a wonderful unfolding and a continuing growth in God's Grace. Nonetheless, I recall the times I have said to wife, child, parishioners and other loved ones and friends, "Sorry, I can't do that now, I have to do thus and so. That's my program. Wait!" When I called my daughter a couple of years ago and told her I was going to marry Jeri, she said, "Dad,

I hope you'll be a better father this time than you were last time." I was dazed for a moment, and she allowed the pause to give us both time for some deep reflection. Then, she added, "Dad, you were a good father. But, you were too busy. You never had enough time for me and for Mother". I promised myself and God that I would do better this time. I'm working on it, but oh, how often we miss the present because we are focusing too much on the future and/or the past! We need to affirm today and to celebrate it with real enthusiasm. Speaking of "enthusiasm", I recalled the other day the meaning of that word with great profit. It comes from two Greek words "En" and "Theos" which combined mean "In God". I suggest that this is the true source of "enthusiasm for living". Are you farsighted in your family living? Does the future or the past blind you to the joys of the present? If so, stop, take time, re-evaluate where you are and re-direct your vision to the present.

Now, consider the matter of our church-life. Some Christians whom we all know are futuristically oriented. They dream of a new sanctuary, a new social hall, new educational facilities or new programs, without really ascertaining whether or not the present facilities and programs are utilized to the maximum. They even dream of a future society in which God's Will is to be known and accepted. Sometimes as they engage in this latter expression of vision, they rule out the possibilities of the present. The result is what many of us view as rather escapist eschatology. By this we mean that if things are merely left to the future without meaningful commitment on our part in terms of present responsibility, we are blinded to immediate

opportunities and challenges to be participants in redeeming our world.

Are there not some things which we may do to hasten the coming of God's Kingdom? Certainly Jesus believed this to be the case. The best of the "Saints" from New Testament times until now have not only been giants in speculation and theory. They have also been activistic in the best sense of the word. It was not so much the preaching and teaching of early Methodists which caused them to make the Church of England of that day so very uncomfortable. It was rather their good works which often caused the leaders of the Church to cringe with fear and to exhibit hostility.

Finally, let us consider our individual and corporate roles as Christians who are a part of global society. In Hebrews 11:8 it is written, "By faith . . . Abraham went out not knowing whither he went." Is this not descriptive of the person and of the church which moves at the impulse and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit of God? That ancient and dim figure, Abraham, leads a procession of which we may all be a part. In a very real sense, he "marched off the map" as the late Halford Luccock has so aptly put it. Abraham led an expeditionary force that moved out beyond familiar landmarks. He was thrust into new and uncharted territory. We, at our best, are all part of this same expeditionary force. It is the big parade of our time, or indeed, of any time. We are thrust into new and uncharted territory. Walt Whitman wrote more than a century ago, these lines: "Listen and I will be honest with you. I do not offer you the old smooth prizes, but offer you new tough ones." The old

prizes are not always attractive to us. Just as Abraham "marched off the map" of his day, so we are called to do the same.

What an example some of the environmentalists furnish us! My only reaction of a negative nature is that many of us are so selective in our environmental concerns that we may create more problems than we help solve. You see, I, for one, am even more concerned about mental, moral and spiritual pollution than I am about the pollution of the atmosphere. I hasten to add that my concern over atmospheric pollution is long-standing and it is very real. If we are to deal in a redemptive way with the possibility of making possible continuous and meaningful living on this planet or even within this universe, we must "march off of the old maps".

Again, what an example medicine furnishes us of those who have "marched off the map" in this area. If you look in the very old medical texts, for example, you discover that bleeding was recommended for virtually every malady. Consider the clinical report of Charles II of England. Here is a quotation: "A pint of blood was extracted from the left shoulder, a half pint of blood was extracted from the royal right shoulder." Of course, the new texts say, "put blood in". Unless our contemporary insanities stop the game, the medical profession will continue to "march off maps".

In every area of human endeavor, the story of success and triumph is the same. Vision is necessary. Of course it is. The author of proverbs 29:18 states: "Where there is no vision, the people perish". Of course they do. Visions are necessary. They enable us to manifest faith and trust. They permit us to make the

most of the present.

Our plea today is that all Christians may look at the present life-situation in which we find ourselves. In the words of the Psalmist, "This is the day which the Lord hath made. Let us rejoice and be glad therein." Every day, when I awaken, I go through a simple little ritual. I say, "Thank you, God, that I am not responsible for the mistakes of yesterday. Thank you, God, that I am not yet responsible for the mistakes I may make tomorrow. Thank you, God, that I am responsible for today. Help me make the most of it, please." I commend some such meaningful exercise of commitment to each of you, my fellow worshippers. Let us not allow our vision to be distorted by either nearsightedness or farsightedness.

It may well be that the proverbialist is quite correct when he observes, "The eyes of the fool are on the end of the earth". Can anything be more tragic than to have our attention so fixed on the distant future (or past) that we miss the greatest opportunities and the most significant happenings of the present? I think not!

ANALYSIS OF SERMON #1

PURPOSE: In answer to the question, "What is the preacher's objective?", the seven members of the control group gave the following answers:

1. "To broaden our narrow interests."
2. "To help us face life with vision while accepting the challenge our Lord offers us."
3. "Alerting the congregation to danger of nearsighted Christianity."
4. "To be knowledgeable of all the past, in its history of people with the church, but not to be nearsighted of the present that retards the visions of the future awareness of mankind and the Christian Religion."
5. "To expand on the larger picture."
6. "To look ahead in life and to realize that there is a God in Jesus and that we must have faith, believing more than what we see close at hand."
7. "To motivate people to think beyond the present problems or situations."

In answer to the question, "Does he make it clear?", the following answers were given:

1. Five said, "yes."
2. One said, "quite."
3. The seventh said, "fairly so."

RELATION TO LIFE: In answer to the question, "What life-situation, problem or area of experience is he dealing with?", the members of the control group gave the following answers:

1. All seven said the matter was "religious."
2. Four said it was also "psychological."
3. Three said it was also "personal."
4. Five said that it was also "social."
5. All seven said "it applied to all people."

TREATMENT: In answer to the question, "Is the problem dealt with realistically?", all seven said, "yes."

In answer to the question, "Is the problem dealt with adequately?", four answered, "yes."

In answer to the question, "Does he provide practical suggestions?", one said, "no", one left the answer blank, and the other five said, "yes."

In answer to the question, "Are the resources of the Christian Faith utilized?", all seven said, "yes."

TITLE: In answer to the questions, "Does the title prepare for the sermon?" and "Is it attractive and inviting?", all seven said, "yes."

SCRIPTURE: In answering the following questions, all seven gave a "yes" answer to each question.
 Does the preacher use a text? ____.
 Does he relate it to the subject he discussed? ____.
 Does he use the scripture to introduce a life situation? ____.
 Does he draw illustrations from biblical material? ____.
 Does he utilize the resources to the fullest advantage? ____.

ILLUSTRATIONS: In answering the following questions, all seven gave a "yes" answer to each question. However, one member questioned the propriety of one illustration in this particular sermon.
 Does he draw illustrations from personal experience? ____.
 From biography? ____.
 From other literary sources? ____.
 Do they help clarify the subject? ____.
 Are they true to life and experience? ____.

RELATION TO PASTORAL WORK: In answering the following questions, all seven members of the group responded with a "yes" answer to each question.
 Does the sermon appear to grow out of personal experience? ____.
 Does it appear to express the thought of one who knows, understands and loves people? ____.
 Would it lead you to turn to the preacher (if you recognized a problem in this area) for counseling or guidance? ____.

ANALYSIS OF SERMON #2

- PURPOSE: In answer to the question, "What is the preacher's chief objective?", the seven members of the control group gave the following answers:
1. "To urge his listeners to deal with the present problems and not simply wait for "a better day."
 2. "To celebrate life in God."
 3. One did not state an objective.
 4. "For us not to look or plan just for the future, or dwell in the past, that makes us unaware of present needs of ourselves, our family, friends and church. To take time to be joyful."
 5. "To remind us not to overlook the present."
 6. "To see things near us, Church-life, familial-life and community-life."
 7. "Making Christians aware of shortcomings of either future or past and negating today. The present counts."

In answer to the question, "Does he make it clear?", the group responded with the following answers:

1. One said, "Quite!"
2. One said, "Abundantly!"
3. One said, "Very much so!"
4. Four said, "Yes."

RELATION TO LIFE: In answer to the question, "What life-situation, problem or area of experience is he dealing with?", the members of the control group gave the following answers:

1. Five said the matter was "primarily religious."
2. Four said the matter was all-inclusive by checking "Religious", "Psychological", "Personal", and "Social".
3. All seven said, "it applied to all people."
4. One stated that it applied more to adults than to children.

TREATMENT: In answer to the question, "Is the problem dealt with realistically?", all seven said, "yes."
 In answer to the question, "Does he provide practical suggestions?", all seven said, "yes." However, one suggested a follow-up sermon to be even more specific.
 In answer to the question, "Are the resources of the Christian Faith utilized?", all seven members of the group said, "yes."

TITLE: In answer to the following questions, all seven members of the control group gave an unqualified "yes" to both questions.
 "Does the title prepare for the sermon?"
 "Is it attractive and inviting?"

SCRIPTURE: In answering the following questions, all seven gave a "yes" answer to each question.
 Does the preacher use a text? ____.
 Does he relate it to the subject he discussed? ____.
 Does he use the scripture to introduce a life situation? ____.
 Does he draw illustrations from biblical material? ____.
 Does he utilize the resources to the fullest advantage? ____.

ILLUSTRATIONS: In answering the following questions, all seven gave a "yes" answer to each question. However, one member questioned the propriety of one illustration in this particular sermon.
 Does he draw illustrations from personal experience? ____.
 From biography? ____.
 From other literary sources? ____.
 Do they help clarify the subject? ____.
 Are they true to life and experience? ____.

RELATION TO PASTORAL WORK: In answering the following questions, all seven members of the group responded with a "yes" answer to each question.
 Does the sermon appear to grow out of personal experience? ____.
 Does it appear to express the thought of one who knows, understands and loves people? ____.
 Would it lead you to turn to the preacher (if you recognized a problem in this area) for counseling or guidance? ____.
 In the case of the last question, three of the members of the control group felt positively identified with the syndrome of "farsightedness." This is a good therapeutic experience. It is such response that often leads to meaningful counseling and guidance.

On the basis of the responses of the control group as they proceeded to analyze the foregoing two sermons, it would appear that, indeed, I am a life-situation preacher and that further, there is a demonstrable relationship between life-situation preaching as practiced by me and pastoral counseling.

The succeeding chapter will bear further testimony to this assertion.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary.

At the outset, the problem dealt with in this professional project was stated as (1) to ascertain the extent or degree to which representative preaching of mine conforms to life-situation preaching; (2) to determine the extent or degree this type of preaching by me demonstrates competence and capacity to assist hearers in dealing creatively with life-situations; (3) to attempt to ascertain if there are relationships discernible as having been creatively affected in the counseling relationship by the preaching under study.

Terms utilized in the study were defined. Life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling were described in detail. Literature in the fields of life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling was reviewed.

Two sermons preached under the circumstances narrated in the preceding chapter were analyzed by utilizing a "Guide For Analyzing A Life-Situation Sermon."

Statistics and observations obtained from notes made following counseling sessions are lifted up for consideration and evaluation. These are presented in a concise manner in this chapter.

Conclusions, which have been formulated on the basis of the research indicated are outlined and discussed.

Conclusions.

During the past ten years a total of 1,560 persons have sought pastoral counseling with me. These ranged from twelve to ninety-two years of age. There were five hundred and twenty-nine male and ten hundred and thirty-one female. The following age distribution is noted. Over fifty years of age numbered five hundred forty-one. Twenty through thirty-nine numbered three hundred seventy-seven. Under twenty numbered two hundred seventy-five.

Of these fifteen hundred sixty persons making an initial contact in search of pastoral counseling, five hundred sixty persons were seen by me only once. This was due to two recognizable factors.

(1) Three-fourths or four hundred twenty persons found their problem or problems solved or resolved or gained a sense of direction in the initial counseling session. Often an early referral was indicated and affected.

(2) One-fourth or one hundred forty of these persons were subsequently referred to another counselor or therapist.

The remaining one thousand persons who made initial contacts in search of pastoral counseling over this ten-year period were seen varying numbers of times. (1) Approximately one-third or three hundred twenty-nine were seen in the counseling relationship for three through five times. (2) One-third, approximately, or three hundred and forty-three were seen in the counseling relationship six through twelve times. (3) Two hundred persons were seen from thirteen through twenty-four times. (4) One hundred twenty-eight persons

were seen for more than twenty-four times. Few were continued beyond a one-year period in the counseling relationship. Many were subsequently referred to other counselors or therapists. Most were seen only once a week.

More than one-third of the persons originally seeking pastoral counseling with me stated that they did so because I was a minister. By their own words they clearly indicated that they would have turned to a minister, initially, for assistance, regardless of his orientation. This group numbered six hundred and seventy-six.

Of the larger group, totaling eight hundred and eighty-four persons, all said (in effect) that they sought counseling from me because of what I communicated through pulpit and other public appearances, except for eighty-one persons who were referred to me by other persons, notably friends, loved ones and other counselors, (including fellow clergy). Among those "other public appearances" referred to above, were social contacts, occasional addresses and weddings and funerals.

Thus it would appear that there is indeed a demonstrable relationship between life-situation preaching and pastoral counseling.

Additional Research Problems.

In the light of the findings of this research, I propose further research in the area of the relationship of life-situation preaching to pastoral counseling as follows: (1) A project to study a series of sermons of the life-situation orientation that is designed for a given situation such as a Lenten Series and given within a short time-span, during which opportunity is provided for short-term and/or crisis-centered counseling. Preferably, this type study effort could be engaged in a Church setting in which I might be a "guest" missionary, or visiting clergyman. This would enable greater objectivity to be utilized. (2) A project to study in depth and detail preaching-counseling in the context of a total Church program over a given period of time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Ackerman, Nathan Ward. Psychodynamics of Family Life: Diagnosis and Treatment of Family Relationships.
New York: Basic Books, 1971. 379 pp.

Allport, Gordon. The Individual and His Religion.
New York: Macmillan, 1950. 147 pp.

_____. The Nature of Prejudice.
Boston: Beacon Press, 1954. 537 pp.

Anderson, William K. Making the Gospel Effective.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1943. 221 pp.

_____. The Pastor and Church.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1943. 320 pp.

Barr, Browne, and Mary Eakin. The Ministering Congregation.
Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1972. 125 pp.

Belgum, David. Clinical Training for Pastoral Care.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956. 136 pp.

Blackwood, Andrew W. Expository Preaching for Today.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1953. 224 pp.

_____. Pastoral Work.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1945. 252 pp.

_____. Planning a Year's Pulpit Work.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1942. 240 pp.

Bower, William Clayton. Christ and Christian Education.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1943. 138 pp.

Broadhurst, Allan R. He Speaks the Word of God: A Study of the Sermons of Norman Vincent Peale.
New York: Prentice-Hall, 1959. 285 pp.

Buttrick, George A. Jesus Came Preaching.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931. 157 pp.

_____. "The Gospel According to St. Matthew: Exposition" in The Interpreter's Bible
Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951. VII, 252.

- Chappell, Clovis G. Anointed to Preach.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1951. 124 pp.
- Conzelmann, Hans. An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament.
New York: Harper & Row, 1968. 373 pp.
- Corson, Fred Pierce. Pattern for Successful Living.
Philadelphia: Winston, 1953. 148 pp.
- Edwards, K. Morgan. More Than Survival.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1961. 128 pp.
- Ferber, Andrew. The Book of Family Therapy.
New York: Science House, 1972. 725 pp.
- Fosdick, Harry Emerson. On Being a Real Person.
New York: Knopf, 1952. 281 pp.
- Frankl, Viktor E. The Doctor and the Soul.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. 295 pp.
- Garnett, A. Campbell. Religion and the Moral Life.
New York: Ronald Press, 1956. 223 pp.
- Guffin, Gilbert L. Called of God.
Westwood: Revell, 1951. 128 pp.
- Hazelton, Roger. God's Way With Man.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1956. 204 pp.
- Hulme, William E. Counseling and Theology.
Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955. 151 pp.
- Ikin, A. Graham. New Concepts of Healing.
New York: Association Press, 1956. 262 pp.
- Jackson, Edgar N. How to Preach to People's Needs.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1956. 191 pp.
- _____. A Psychology for Preaching.
New York: Hawthorn Books, 1961. 191 pp.
- Jones, Edgar DeWitt. The Royalty of the Pulpit.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951. 447 pp.
- _____. Sermons I Like to Preach.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 191 pp.
- Jones, Ilion T. Principles and Practice of Preaching.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1956. 272 pp.

- Jordan, G. Ray. You Can Preach.
New York: Reveli, 1951. 256 pp.
- Kemp, Charles F. Life-Situation Preaching.
St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1956. 262 pp.
- _____. Pastoral Preaching.
St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1959. 225 pp.
- Kennedy, Gerald H. With Singleness of Heart.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951. 157 pp.
- Klausner, Samuel Z. Psychiatry and Religion.
Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964. 299 pp.
- Koller, Charles W. Expository Preaching Without Notes.
Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962. 145 pp.
- Kyle, Haselden, Kyle. The Urgency of Preaching.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. 125 pp.
- Ligon, Ernest M. Dimensions of Character.
New York: Macmillan, 1956. 497 pp.
- Luccock, Halford E. In the Minister's Workshop.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1934. 229 pp.
- Macgregor, W. M. The Making of a Preacher.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946. 96 pp.
- May, Rollo. Man's Search for Himself.
New York: Norton, 1953. 281 pp.
- McCracken, Robert J. The Making of a Sermon.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. 104 pp.
- Miller, Randolph Crump. Education for Christian Living.
Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1956. 418 pp.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson.
The Purposes of the Church and Its Ministry.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. 215 pp.
- Ogden, Schubert M. Christ Without Myth.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961. 189 pp.
- Oman, John. Concerning the Ministry.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1937. 180 pp.
- Perrin, Norman. Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus.
New York: Harper & Row, 1967. 272 pp.

- Rhoades, Winfred. The Self You Have to Live With.
Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1947. 254 pp.
- Robinson, James H. Adventurous Preaching.
New York: Channel Press, 1945. 114 pp.
- Sangster, W. E. The Secret of Radiant Life.
New York: Abingdon Press, 1947. 219 pp.
- Sherrill, Lewis Joseph. The Gift of Power.
New York: Macmillan, 1955. 203 pp.
- _____. The Struggle of the Soul.
New York: Macmillan, 1951. 155 pp.
- Sperry, Willard L. Religion and Education.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945. 114 pp.
- Stowe, Lyman Beecher. Saints, Sinners and Beechers.
Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1934. 308 pp.
- White, Ernest. Christian Life and the Unconscious.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. 190 pp.
- Williams, Daniel Day. What Present Day Theologians Are Thinking.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952. 158 pp.
- Williams, J. Paul. The New Education and Religion.
New York: Association Press, 1945. 198 pp.
- Wise, Carroll A. Psychiatry and the Bible.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. 109 pp.
- Young, Richard K., and Albert L. Meiburg. Spiritual Therapy.
New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960. 184 pp.

Periodicals

- Bowman, Harold Leonard. "Counseling Can Improve Your Preaching."
Pastoral Psychology, XVIII (February 1957)
- Casteel, John L. "Homiletical Method for Pastoral Preaching."
Pastoral Psychology, VI (November 1955)
- Eppinger, Paul D. "Four Great Baptist Preachers and the Theology
of Preaching." Foundations: A Baptist Journal of History and
Theology, XI:2 (April-June 1968), 110-126.

- Hiltner, Seward. "Pastoral Psychology and Preaching."
Pastoral Psychology, VI (November 1955)
- Kemp, Charles F. "Life-Situation Preaching."
Pulpit Digest, XXVII:113 (September 1947), 60-61.
- Morlan, George K. "Preaching and Psychological Research."
Pulpit Digest, XXXII:16 (March 1952)
- Otto, Herbert A., and John Gabler. "Conceptualizations of Family Strengths in Family Life and Other Professional Literature."
Journal of Marriage and the Family, XXVI:2 (May 1964), 221-223.
- _____. "What Is a Strong Family?"
Marriage & Family Living, XXIV:1 (February 1962), 77-81.
- _____. "Human Potentialities Research: Application to Geriatric Programs." Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, XII:7 (July 1964), 677-686.
- _____. "The Personal and Family Resource Development Programs--A Preliminary Report." International Journal of Social Psychiatry, VIII:3 (Summer 1962), 185-195.
- _____. "The Personal Resource Development Research--The Multiple Strength Perception Effect." Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters, XXXVIII (1961-62), 182-186.
- _____, and Kenneth A. Griffiths. "A New Approach to Developing the Student's Strengths." Social Casework, XLV:3 (March 1963), 119-124.
- _____. "Self Perception of Personality Strengths by Four Discrete Groups." Journal of Human Relations, XII:4 (August 1963), 523-531.
- _____. "The Family Resource Development Program: The Production of Criteria for Assessing Family Strengths," Family Process, II:2 (September 1963), 329-339.
- _____, and Richard Kinter. "The Family Strength Concept and Foster Home Selection." Child Welfare, XLVIII:7 (July 1964) 359-364.
- _____. "Personal and Family Strength Research and Spontaneity Training." Group Psychotherapy Journal, XVII:2-3 (June-September 1964), 143-149.
- _____. "The Personal and Family Strength Research Projects--Some Implications for the Therapist." Mental Hygiene, XLVIII:3 (July 1964), 439-450.

- _____. "Family Strengths in the Treatment Process: A Research Study." Monograph reporting research project supported by the University of Utah Research Fund. Canada's Mental Health, XIV:1 (January-February 1966), 1-6.
- _____, and Arnold C. Griffiths. "Personality Strength Concepts in the Helping Professions." Psychiatric Quarterly, XXX:4 (October 1965), 632-645.
- _____. "A Proposal for an Institute of Human Potentialities." Journal of Humanistic Psychology. (N.Y.P.)
- _____. "The Minister and Family Strengths," Pastoral Psychology, XVII:163 (April 1966), 21-28.
- _____. "The Human Potentialities of Nurses and Patients." Nursing Outlook, XIII:8 (August 1965), 32-35.
- _____. "Toward a Holistic Treatment Program--Some Concepts and Methods," in Harold Greenwald (ed.) The Active Psychotherapies. New York: Atherton Press, 1966.
- _____, and Kenneth W. Hansen. "The Multiple Strength Perception Method: A Four Year Evaluation," to be published. Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, XLIII (1966).
- _____, and Sandra L. Healy. "Adolescents' Self-Perception of Personality Strengths," Journal of Human Relations, XIV:3 (1966).
- _____, and Sarah M. Otto. "A New Perspective of the Adolescent," Psychology in the Schools (January 1967).
- _____. "The Minerva Experience: Initial Report," in James F. T. Bugental (ed.), The Challenge of Humanistic Psychology, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.
- _____. (ed.) Human Potentialities: The Challenge and the Promise. New York: Science and Behavior Books, 1966. A collection of seven articles by nationally-known scientists providing new perspectives of the human potential.